

Rose Care For The Rogue Valley



“It’s the time that you spent on your rose that makes your rose so important...People have forgotten this truth, but you mustn’t forget it. You become responsible forever for what you’ve tamed. You’re responsible for your rose.”

– Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Roses are a wonderful way to bring color, fragrance and texture to our gardens. Many choose not to grow them because they are ‘hard to care for’. You may be surprised at how easy rose care can be. Check out these simple tips and care instructions for more information.

Planting And Feeding

Roses like lots of sun and well drained soil. Be sure to mix in plenty of compost when planting, and don’t forget the fertilizer. Roses are heavy feeders. For the best color, quantity and size of blooms, consider monthly applications of Natural Guard Rose Food. Begin applications in February, just after your winter pruning, and feed through July. Fall feeding is not necessary for roses.

Pruning

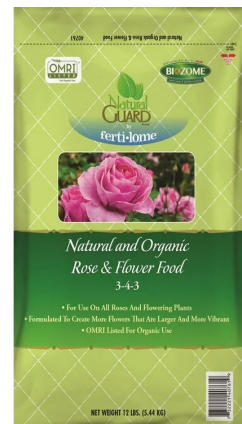
It is important to have sharp pruning tools when pruning roses. Dull tools tear the cambium, causing damage that makes it difficult for your roses to recover. Jagged cuts also encourage insects and fungal spores to attach. Sharpen your pruners well before pruning, and more often as needed. Don’t know how to sharpen? No problem! Bring us your pruners and we will do it for you.

Most roses are the easy to care for. They can be pruned any time of year and still recover, and bloom again. Landscape, wild and climbing roses can be pruned as needed, with no real worry as to where to prune, or how far. It is best to prune in the dormant season or just after a bloom cycle.

Most modern roses such as hybrid teas, grandiflora and the like, need more attention with their pruning, the most attention being for the winter pruning. In November, cut back the roses approximately halfway, or to about waist high. Don’t worry about where, just whack them back. This cleanup will make them look better through winter, reduce insect and disease issues, and reduce the amount of dormant spraying you have to do.

In February, do your final winter pruning. Begin by removing dead, broken or diseased canes. Then thin the remaining canes to 4-5, evenly spaced canes about as big around as your thumb. Remove all the thick heavy canes and the little spindley ones. Trim the remaining 4 -5 canes back to 12-18” tall. Prune directly above a bud that faces away from the center of the plant. If you are confused, stop in for a quick demonstration.

In-Season pruning consists of deadheading, and cutting back suckers and wild canes. You can prune weekly if you are so inclined but monthly is all that is needed. Begin by removing any damaged, diseased or disorderly canes. Be sure to wipe your pruners with a bleach rag between cuts if you have diseased canes. This will reduce the spread of the disease. Finish by deadheading your spent flowers. Start from just below the spent flower and look for the second set of 5 leaflets. Cut the cane just above that. Again, stop in for a free demonstration if you like.





Spraying

It seems that we are not the only ones in this world who love roses. Insects, fungi and bacteria all seem to have a liking for America's flower. There are several ways to protect your roses along with regular pruning and cleanup. Here are some organic choices we like:

Fertilome Fungicide 5 - This biofungicide/ bactericide is a strain of beneficial bacteria that provides control or suppression of several diseases that affect roses.

Natural Guard Horticultural Oil - Derived from the Neem tree, this oil has both insecticidal and fungicidal qualities. It can be used as a dormant spray, or in season. This has the advantage of reducing the number of sprays you have to keep.



Timing for Sprays

Many of the newer landscape roses are quite insect and disease resistant. If you are wary about using sprays, these are a great choice for your yard. Stop in and we can direct you to the varieties that are best suited for your space. These won't give you the fragrance, color options, or cutting capabilities of other modern roses but they will look nice in the landscape.

Most modern roses that we are familiar with perform best when given more diligent attention. Inspecting them when you are pruning and deadheading will give you a leg up in defending your roses before the problem gets out of hand. Dormant sprays are some of the safest, most effective ways of protecting your roses from damaging insects and diseases. Spray just after your fall cleanup in November, and again in February after your winter pruning. All other spraying should be done on an 'as needed' basis. We like to use Natural Guard Spinosaad Soap, a combination of organic ingredients that are effective and safe.



Protecting our pollinators

As we learn more about the world around us we become better stewards of our environment. The use of organic compounds does not mean that they are always safe for our beneficial insects. The timing of your application can greatly reduce the risk of exposure to pollinators and other beneficials while still remaining effective against pests. Late evening applications ensure that the pollinators and many of the other beneficials are gone for the night, leaving the pests behind. The sprays, once dried become less effective and therefore less harmful to the beneficials.

Beneficial insects

The use of ladybugs, praying mantis and other insectivores to keep our roses clean, can be quite effective as well. If you decide to use beneficials, be sure to stop spraying at least one week before setting them out, and do not spray insecticides while they are present.

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